

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04

SIL-01 FEA-01 OES-03 TRSE-00 INT-05 /052 W

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R 211706Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2962

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, BE

SUBJECT: STRIKES AVERTED IN PETROLEUM AND PETROCHEMICAL SECTORS

REF: BRUSSELS 382

SUMMARY. GOVERNMENT CONCILIATION HAS RESULTED IN AGREEMENT IN THE PETROLEUM SECTOR AND A STRIKE NOT APPEARS UNLIKELY.
END SUMMARY.

1. AS RESULT OF LAST MINUTE GOVERNMENT CONCILIATION EFFORTS, ACCEPTED BY BOTH SIDES, PETROLEUM WORKERS UNION OFFICIALS HAVE POSTPONED STRIKE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 20 UNTIL JANUARY 27 IN ORDER TO PERMIT UNION MEMBERS TO VOTE ON PROPOSED SETTLEMENT. RESULT EXPECTED LATER THIS WEEK. EMPLOYERS HAVE AGREED TO ACCEPT PROPOSAL IF WORKERS DO.

2. WHILE FULL DETAILS ARE STILL LACKING, PROPOSED SETTLEMENT IS BELIEVED TO CALL FOR A 10 BF HOURLY WAGE INCREASE (UNIONS HAD ASKED FOR 17 BF: EMPLOYERS HAD PROPOSED 6.27 BF BASED ON INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY ESTIMATED AT 4 PERCENT), AN INCREASED ANNUAL BONUS, ADDITIONAL VACATION TIME AND LARGER
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PREMIUM FOR MEMBERSHIP IN UNIONS (IN ABSENCE OF CLOSED SHIP

PROVISIONS).

3. PETROLEUM SECTOR EMPLOYERS ARE DISAPPOINTED WITH TERMS OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT, WHICH EXCEEDS INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY, AND HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH PRIME MINISTER TO LIMIT WAGE INCREASED WITHOUT SUCCESS. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS SO FAR THAT THE EFFECT OF THE WAGE SETTLEMENT ON THE PRICE OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS HAS BEEN ADDRESSED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

4. PROPOSED SETTLEMENT IN ANTWERP AREA PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES IS ALSO BASED ON 10 BF HOURLY WAGE INCREASE FOR 5000 WORKERS (UNIONS HAD ASKED FOR 20 BF; MANAGEMENT HAS PROPOSED BETWEEN 5 AND 6 BF). PROPOSED SETTLEMENT IN THIS SECTOR ALSO SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY WORKERS BY REFERENDUM.RENNER

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